

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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Making Conservation  
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November 23, 2020

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Jolee Hui  
County of Los Angeles  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Nov 23 2020**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

RE: Hsi Lai Monastery Site – Notice of  
Preparation of an Environmental Impact  
Report (NOP)  
SCH # 2020110040  
GTS # 07-LA-2020-03409  
Vic. LA-60/PM: 16.097

Dear Jolee Hui:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced NOP. The project is the development of a monastery retreat center with associated accessory uses consisting of 17 buildings concentrated on the northern portion of the site. There will be a combined total of 143,671 square feet of programmed space, including the renovation of one existing 5,318 square-foot residential building into a volunteers' dormitory. The remaining portion of the site would remain undeveloped except for new landscaping and walkways. The County of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The project is located approximately two miles from the State Route 60 (SR-60) and S Hacienda Boulevard interchange in Hacienda Heights. From reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

- Senate Bill 743 (2013) mandates that VMT be used as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts of all future development projects under CEQA, starting July 1, 2020. For information on determining transportation impacts in terms of VMT on the State Highway System, see the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* by the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), dated December 2018: [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743\\_Technical\\_Advisory.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf).
- The County can also refer to Caltrans' updated *Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide* (TISG), dated May 2020 and released on Caltrans' website in July 2020. Caltrans' new TISG is largely based on the OPR 2018 Technical Advisory: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-05-20-approved-vmt-focused-tisg-a11y.pdf>.
- The updated TISG states, "Additional future guidance will include the basis for requesting transportation impact analysis that is not based on VMT. This guidance will include a simplified safety analysis approach that reduces risks to all road users and that focuses on multi-modal conflict analysis as well as access management issues." Since releasing the TISG, Caltrans has released interim safety analysis guidance, dated July 2020 and found here, for the County's reference: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-07-01-interim-ldigr-safety-guidance-a11y.pdf>.

- Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the VMT analysis for this project. As discussed in Caltrans' new TISG, Caltrans strongly recommends undertaking project VMT analysis, significance determination, and potential mitigation in a manner consistent with OPR's Technical Advisory.

The following information is included for your consideration.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. Furthermore, Caltrans encourages Lead Agencies to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies that reduce VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Thus, Caltrans supports the TDM strategies this project has incorporated, such as the new multi-use public trail to be developed along the southeasterly portion of the site. Additional TDM strategies that the County may want to consider integrating into this project in order to further reduce VMT include:

- Ensure that project driveway placements do not directly cause issues related to line of sight of pedestrians or bicyclists.
- Verify that no more parking than required by the local jurisdiction is provided.
- Provide safe and secure bicycle parking.

Also, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends that the project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. If construction traffic is expected to cause delays on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control management plan detailing these delays for Caltrans' review.

If you have any questions about these comments, please contact Emily Gibson, the project coordinator, at [Emily.Gibson@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Emily.Gibson@dot.ca.gov), and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2020-03409.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON  
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief  
cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse